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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #02281-87

29 May 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Maj Gen Frank B. Horton III, USAF
Chairman

SUBJECT: Proposal to Republish Guidelines for the Estimative Process

1. DIA's response to our request for comments on the estimative process expressed general satisfaction but suggested "that the DCI reaffirm and issue certain key principles and policy for the guidance and compliance of the Intelligence Community" (Attachment 1). Some of the other NFIB Principals implied in their comments the desirability of such an enterprise, in most cases to reemphasize but in some to revise the broad policies and procedures applied to the process. The proposal has been discussed within the NIC and, provided that certain caveats could be observed, we would endorse it.

2. The last such effort was signed out by Mr. Casey on 30 July 1981 (Attachment 2). Policies and procedures have evolved somewhat since then, and are not consistently applied, as the document has receded in the consciousness of the key players, and has become increasingly out of date (Attachment 3). We would caveat that a rewrite that attempted to rigorously legislate detailed policies and procedures would be counterproductive to a process that necessarily involves the application of considerable amount of judgment in often unique situations; and one that attempted significant restructuring would unravel a system that largely works well. However, we would agree that a republished set of broad guidelines incorporating at most changes at the margin could be useful in enhancing community consistency, encouraging a community approach, and demonstrating the seriousness of our community-wide efforts to continue to assure quality, relevancy, integrity, and objectivity.

3. We propose to proceed as follows: I would make the proposal at NFIB on 1 June with your endorsement, the Principals would discuss it, and if we reached agreement, we would address it in the DCI response to NSDD 266 on the estimative process. We would propose that a NIC Vice Chairman--Fred

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Hutchinson--serve as manager of the drafting effort. He would work with the Community to develop a drafting process. We would use the 1981 document as a starting point, update it where needed in consideration of the draft NSDD 266 response prepared for the 1 June NFIB meeting, and modify it as appropriate in consideration of the NFIB inputs we have received or may be generated as a result of the 1 June meeting. The manager would then coordinate the draft with senior agency representatives. The coordinated product would be reviewed at NFIB prior to DCI signature.

4. If you agree, Attachments 4 and 5 are revised pages for your back-up book for the 1 June NFIB. Attachment 4 would modify my briefing to make the proposal, and Attachment 5 would modify the DCI/DDCI talker to endorse it. We are prepared to discuss this proposal at our pre-brief with you scheduled for 0930 on 1 June.

Very respectfully,



Frank B. Horton III

Attachments:

1. DIA Input
2. 1981 DCI Memo
3. Evolution since 1981
4. New page 8 of Tab 1 for 1 June NFIB book
5. New page 1 of Tab 2 for 1 June NFIB book

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SUBJECT: Proposal to Republish Guidelines for the Estimative Process

DCI/NIC/C/NIC:FBHorton

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FOUO-0108/DE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL

TO: NFIB SECRETARIAT

SUBJECT: The Integrity and Objectivity of National Foreign
Intelligence Estimates

Reference: Memorandum, NFIB 89.9, 28 April 1987, subject as above.

1. DIA welcomes the opportunity to comment on the integrity and objectivity of national intelligence estimates vis-a-vis policy advocacy. A detailed assessment of the system and recommendations for improvements are attached as enclosures.

2. In general, DIA believes that:

a. The current system of preparing national estimates and submitting them to a critical interagency coordination process does an excellent job of maintaining the integrity and objectivity of national intelligence estimates.

b. DIA does not perceive any significant problems that impinge on the objectivity and integrity of national intelligence estimates at the DoD/JCS level. We must constantly strive to avoid any influence on the substantive content of estimates by policymakers, while ensuring that our intelligence estimates are policy relevant. In our view, integrity and objectivity depend upon the quality of the senior intelligence staff and community, organization safeguards and procedures.

3. We feel that U.S. intelligence must be subject to stringent supervision with regard to integrity and objectivity. To that end, we recommend that the DCI reaffirm and issue certain key principles and policies for the guidance and compliance of the Intelligence Community.

4. We look forward to the late May briefing to the NFIB on the community response to NSDD 266, "Implementation of the Recommendations of the President's Special Review Board."

LEONARD H. PERROOTS
Lieutenant General, USAF
Director

2 Enclosures
1. Current System
2. Problems/Recommendations

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CURRENT SYSTEM

1. DIA believes that the current system of preparing national estimates does an excellent job of maintaining the integrity and objectivity of the estimative process. Procedures and policies within DIA and the NFIB process itself contribute toward that end.

2. At the Terms of Reference (TOR)/Concept stage, there is a great deal of coordination among the participating agencies to ensure that all viewpoints and expertise are taken into consideration.

a. Within DIA, there is extensive coordination at all levels to add, change, or delete portions of the TOR as appropriate.

b. The DoD/JCS consumers, especially the U&S Commanders, are queried to determine the relevancy of the TOR to their needs and to ensure the estimate focuses on issues of greatest policymaker concern.

3. During the drafting stage, a principal drafter is often selected from the various agencies to draft and manage the preparation of an estimate for a given NIO. In this regard, DIA provides 10-20 percent of the major drafters for key military national estimates. Such participation helps ensure that drafting is not dominated by any one agency but based on where the best expertise resides. The system provides a more collegial character to the estimative process.

4. The use by CIA of experts from outside the Intelligence Community to contribute to an estimate brings in their special expertise. Also the review by the Senior Review Board again contributes to the appropriateness, sufficiency, and adequacy of a draft prior to its release to the Community for agency coordination.

5. During the coordination stage within DIA, the draft estimate is thoroughly exposed to both DIA and Service intelligence examination. Each Service has its own representative and makes independent assessments.

a. We look especially hard at any text that appears to be advocating policy. We instruct our representative to ensure that any such policy-advocacy statements are deleted from the text at the NIO draft coordination meeting.

b. DIA maintains a policy against providing a draft estimate to our Defense consumers to avoid even the possibility of pressure for policy-supportive textual changes. A consumer request to preview a draft can be approved only by the Director.

Enclosure 1
to FOUO-0108/DE

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PROBLEMS/RECOMMENDATION

1. DIA does not perceive any significant problems that impinge on the objectivity and integrity of national intelligence estimates at the DoD/JCS level. We do feel, however, that the Intelligence Community must constantly guard against policymakers influencing the substantive content of intelligence estimates.

2. For the most part, integrity and objectivity depend upon the quality of the senior intelligence staff. If they are worthy of their responsible positions, they will not shield their superiors and consumers from "bad news."

3. We feel U.S. intelligence must be subject to stringent supervision with regard to integrity and objectivity. To that end, we recommend that the DCI issue and reiterate certain policies and procedures to strengthen confidence in the national estimates process:

- Emphasis on the cruciality of maintaining the objectivity and integrity of National Intelligence Estimates.

- Specific prohibition against the inclusion in any estimate of policy-prescriptive judgments.

- Issuance of a new policy procedure that any uncoordinated, proposed changes made during or following a meeting of NFIB Principals shall be remanded to the participating agencies for substantive review before being incorporated into the text of the document, published, and disseminated.

- Reaffirmation to NFIB Principals, National Intelligence Officers, and member organizations of the mandatory use of dissenting footnotes or parallel text in NIEs whenever a member organization believes it necessary.

- Prohibition against providing a draft NIE to any policymaker or other non-members of the Intelligence Community without express authorization from an NFIB Principal. Any such instance shall be made part of the official record through notation of minutes of the NFIB that considered the estimate.

- Instructions from the NIC to ensure that all participating NFIB organizations shall have adequate time to review proposed last-minute substantive changes to draft NIEs.

4. We strongly recommend the inclusion of the above points be part of the May briefing to the NFIB Principals.

Enclosure 2
to FOUO-0108/DE

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6. At the NIO coordination meeting, a U&S Command intelligence representative on occasion may be invited to participate, particularly if the Command has pertinent information not generally available in the Washington area.

7. The DCI practice of encouraging the taking of footnotes and alternate views provides a wholesome way of presenting opposing views on the same page and in the same document. Such alternate views/footnotes represent dissenting positions and allow the consumer to note the differences of opinion within the Community. DIA strongly supports this practice. DIA encourages its representatives to take "reserves" whenever warranted.

8. Prior to the NFIB meeting, the Director, DIA, convenes and chairs the Military Intelligence Board (MIB) to exchange military views on a given estimate and discuss proposed changes, if any, to be raised at the NFIB meeting. The MIB further provides frank and open discussion of a substantive draft. The Services may or may not join DIA in a proposed dissenting view, based on their independent assessment of the evidence--another example of the integrity of the estimative process.

9. The NFIB meeting itself offers further opportunity for high-level discussion of any proposed changes. If there is an issue unresolvable at the table, a draft can be and occasionally is remanded back to the NIO and the Community representatives for further work. Even then, the estimate may be again considered by the NFIB for final vote, if need be.

10. In summary, the entire national estimates process is geared to provide an impartial consideration of the available evidence and make the best possible judgments. DIA is well served by the current process because the military views are fully represented in the national estimates; policy advocacy is shunned; and DIA's role as an independent intelligence agency is preserved.